

IOWA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Application Packet for Charter School Status
And
Request for Proposal - Planning and Implementation Grants
September 2003

No Child Left Behind Act,
Title V, Part B, Public Charter Schools Program
In Cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GRIMES STATE OFFICE BUILDING
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

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Introduction

Charter schools legislation was passed by the Iowa legislature in the spring of 2003. A charter school in Iowa is a public school initiated by a principal or a group of parents or guardians, or teachers as an autonomous school of choice, operating as a new attendance center within their district. A charter school may be established by creating a new school within an existing public school or converting an existing public school to charter school status. The charter school must have classrooms for instructional purposes for elementary, middle, or secondary school students.

School-centered governance, autonomy, and a clear design for how and what students will learn are the essential characteristics of a charter school. Attendance and employment in a charter school is an option for students and staff members. Employees of a charter school are to be considered employees of the school district.

The “charter,” as defined in the Charter Schools Legislation, describes the school goals, standards, education design, governance and operations. The degree of autonomy exercised by the charter school on such issues as personnel, curriculum and facilities, is negotiated between the charter applicants and the local school board. Under Iowa law, a charter school is not a separate legal entity independent of the school district, but rather is a public school defined uniquely by a charter and autonomous while remaining within the school district. The charter application, approved by the local school board and the State Board of Education, and accompanying agreements constitute charter school status. Together, these documents serve as the contract between the charter school, the local school board, and the State Board of Education. These documents will be, at a minimum, the terms of a four-year enforceable, renewable contract.

Charter School Development

At the center of the charter is a clear statement of mission, goals, philosophy, values and principles that serve to guide the creation and operation of the learning environment and the school. A charter school must have a clear purpose. The charter school should be developed based on effective, scientifically research-based methods and strategies. The charter school must implement innovative strategies and proven methods for

improving student achievement, which are developed around local academic content standards. Information on the most recent research and evaluation of education reform designs, models, and strategies at the National Clearing House for Comprehensive School Reform <http://www.goodschools.gwu.edu>.

Teaching methodologies, school management, and governance must be based on reliable research and effective practices. The charter school should embody a comprehensive design for effective school functioning, including data-driven instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, school management, and a commitment to creating a positive learning climate. This design should align with the school's curriculum, technology, professional development, and finances and must be clearly reflected in the implementation plan.

A charter application also contains elements similar to a small business plan. The application describes the school's design and delineates mutual agreements among the charter developer, the local school board and other parties regarding such issues as: budget, employment, contracted services, governance, facilities, special education, content standards, curriculum, and assessment of students.

Both the planning and charter school status grants are available through the Iowa Department of Education to support public charter school development. The application processes for both should consist of a series of meetings, dialogues and negotiations between the developers, appropriate district staff, and school board members. The open sharing of information and ideas between all parties is essential to the process and the development of a successful public charter school. Early, informal discussions between the applicant and the school district are highly encouraged before the official application is submitted to the local board. This may help in the development of a quality and successful application. In the best-case scenario, most issues can be informally resolved before the official application is submitted to the district and the 60 days statutory review process and timeline begin.

Purpose of Public Charter Schools in Iowa

1. Pilot ten (10) statewide public charter schools in Iowa that are high quality, research-based, and educationally diverse.
2. Provide additional options for schools in need of assistance.

3. Determine the impact of charter schools on student learning and the public school system.
4. Provide increased opportunities for parental choice.
5. Disseminate best practices.

Questions: contact Laurie Phelan, Iowa Department of Education, 515-242-5611. Laurie.Phelan@ed.state.ia.us

Application Process

The Iowa Department of Education was successful in receiving a grant under Title V, Part B of the No Child Left Behind Act Charter School Program. This grant will provide planning and seed money over a three-year period for 10 public charter schools. Charter school developers may apply for either charter school planning or charter school status (implementation). The State Board of Education is seeking a diversity of charter school applications from both urban and rural settings statewide.

All applications should reflect a vision of school that addresses the needs of all students with a specific focus on populations such as at-risk, educationally disadvantaged, talented and gifted, special needs, and students with disabilities. Each successful charter school application will clearly identify the performance goals and objectives by which the achievement of all students will be measured. These goals are to be aligned with the overall district wide goals for school improvement and student achievement.

Eligible Applicants (Developers)

A principal, and/or group of parents and guardians, and/or teachers may submit an application to their local school board to create a new school or covert an existing school to a charter school. The school, (attendance center), must be located within their school district. The application must demonstrate the support of at least fifty percent of the teachers employed at the school on the date of submission of the application and fifty percent of the voting parents or guardians whose children are enrolled at the school. The individual(s) submitting the application are considered charter school developers.

How To Submit An Application

Developer:

1. Determine if the application will be for planning or for Charter School Status (implementation).
 - Guidelines and forms for developing an application are provided by the Iowa Department of Education in the Charter Schools Application Packet in the Programs and Services (Charter School) section.
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/chart/index.html>
 - Assure all areas of the applications have been addressed.
2. Submit the application (Planning or Charter School Status) to the local school board no later than October 1, unless the developer and local school board establish an alternative agreed upon date. The agreed upon date can not be later than November 1 if the goal is to establish the charter school at the beginning of the school district's next school year.
3. Be available for questions from the local school board prior to the date of the board meeting and at the meeting when the board will vote on the application.
4. Work with the local school board to assure the approved application is submitted to the Iowa Department of Education no later than 30 days following board action. Appeals on denied applications should be submitted to the department within the same timeframe.
5. Determine, in partnership with the local school board, if public charter school funds will be requested from the Iowa Department of Education. If yes, assure that the budget for proposed grant activities is included with the application.

Local School Board Responsibility

1. By October 1, 2003 local school boards should develop and adopt procedures, criteria, and weighting of the criteria to determine approval or denial of a proposed planning or charter school status application. A local school board may elect to adopt the guidelines developed by the Iowa Department of Education outlined in this Public Charter School Application Packet. At a minimum, the local school board guidelines must reflect the criteria developed by the Iowa Department of Education.

2. Receive and review all applications for converting an existing school or creating a new school for a charter school, including planning applications.
3. The board should include in the review process: (1) a person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools, regardless of whether that person resided within the district or not, and (2) a parent or guardian of a child that would be enrolled in the charter.
4. Seek clarification on questions related to the application from the developer(s) prior to the board meeting.
5. The board should consider holding community meetings in the affected areas or the entire district to assist the local board in its decision to approve an application for charter school status.
6. Inform the charter school developer(s) of the date the board will review and take action on the application.
7. Accept or deny the application for planning or charter school status within sixty calendar days after the application is received. If the application is denied, written notice must be provided to the developer and Iowa Department of Education within thirty days after board action. This notice must specify the exact reasons for the denial and provide documentation supporting those reasons.

Application Process for Planning Grant

Applications for Planning

Intent of Planning Application

The planning phase has a two-fold purpose. First, it serves as the official notice to the local school board and the State Board of Education that there is interest in and intent to establish a charter school in the district. Second, the planning phase allows the developers to collect information, locate resources, communicate with the community, school district administration and staff, and design a comprehensive plan for the charter. The amount of time allowed for planning is no more than one year, but the timeline must be included in the planning application submitted to the local school board. If awarded, planning funding may be used beyond the initial planning phase but limited to 36 months of which no more than 18 months can be used for planning and design and no more than 24 months can be used for implementation.

The local school board may receive applications for charter school planning at any time, however no later than October 1, unless the developer and local school board establishes an alternative agreed upon date. The agreed upon date can not be later than November 1 if the goal of the developer is to establish the charter school at the beginning of the school district's next school year. Review the Application Timeline included in the Forms section of this packet closely. If there is a delayed application date, the amount of time for planning is shortened if the goal is to start the charter school at the beginning of the next school year.

The application for a planning grant is an indication to both the local school board and the State Board of Education of intent to establish a charter school and apply for charter school status. The local school board must approve or deny the application for planning by a majority vote. If it is approved, the developer and the local school board submit the complete application for planning to the Iowa Department of Education no later than 15 days after local school board approval the planning application. A Charter School Planning Contract will be developed providing up to \$50,000 for planning the development of the proposed public charter school.

Local school board approved applications should be sent to:

Note: Deadline for Planning Application: October 1 or if approved, November 1.

Laurie Phelan, Administrative Consultant
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building, 3rd Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

If an application for planning is denied by the local school board, funding will not be available through the Iowa Department of Education. However, the developer has the freedom to continue to develop an application for charter school status and submit it to the local school board for consideration. If the decision is made to apply for Charter School Status, please refer to that section of this application packet for directions on the application process.

Guidelines: Application for Planning

- **Cover Sheet**

Complete a cover sheet that will include the following items. A sample cover sheet is included in the forms section of this application packet.

- Name of developer(s)
- Addresses, phone number(s) and e-mail addresses of developer(s)
- Resident school district of developer(s)
- Name and contact information for the Charter School Manager
- Brief (3-4 lines) description of the proposed charter school
- Name of Proposed Charter School
- Local School District
- Number of students in the district, by elementary, middle and high school as appropriate to the charter school
- Whether applicant is proposing an entirely new school within an existing school or converting an existing school to charter school status

- **Overview**

Provide the following information in narrative form (not to exceed five (5) single-spaced typewritten pages).

1. Mission and Vision: Why is the charter school needed? What is the anticipated broad goal of the school? What are the student's needs that will be addressed?
2. Students: What is the population to be served and how does the broad goal relate to the population? How many students are anticipated to enroll in the first year? What would be the anticipated final target for student enrollment? What are the anticipated ages of the students attending the charter school? Complete the Charter School Student Population Form.
3. Innovation: What will be unique about the school's educational program that will set it apart from other schools in the district?

4. Success: What strategic actions will be taken to position the charter school for success? For example: financial resources that extend beyond loans, progress towards identifying a school facility, involvement in the planning by individuals with experience in developing public charter schools, etc.
5. Timeline: Develop a proposed timeline for submittal of full application for charter school status to the local school board. If the developer proposes to have the charter school established by the fall following the submittal of the planning application, the local school board must receive the application for charter status no later than March 31. Establish the proposed official start date for the charter school. Complete a Planning Timeline; a model is attached for your consideration.

- **Educational Program/Student Achievement**

The proposed charter school's education plan should align with the district goals for school improvement and should include specific, measurable goals.

Include a plan for determining and developing an innovative and challenging education program for the student population to be served. The following criteria and questions may help guide your thinking, however each question does not require an answer for a planning application. The plan should not exceed three (3) single, spaced typewritten pages).

1. Educational Philosophy and Program: What is the instructional design and program being considered for the school? How will the program result in successful student achievement? Will the school utilize specific curricula or focus on a particular curricular area?
2. Goals and Measurement: What will be the goals for the school and its students? How will these goals be measured (assessments to be used)? How will progress be demonstrated? How will student achievement be measured, including at a minimum the state requirements?
3. Diverse Learning Needs: What are the plans for providing services to students with diverse learning needs such as students

with disabilities, students with special needs or English as a second language?

4. Research Based Practice: What are the proven models, techniques and/or practices being considered for the charter school? Why will the program be effective for all students attending the charter school?
5. Academic Progress: Describe initial considerations regarding measuring academic progress.
6. Other Services: Beyond classroom teaching, what services may be provided (i.e. Head Start, tutoring, mentoring, computer training)? What resources are needed in order to offer these services? What, if any, extra-curricular activities will be offered? How will the school address language barriers?

- **Organization and Structure**

Note: Each approved charter school will have an advisory council will be appointed by the local board and will not include more than one board member. This council will serve as the immediate oversight mechanism for the charter school. They will decide on matters related to budgeting, curriculum and operating procedures. They will meet at least quarterly.

Provide the following information in narrative form (not to exceed five (5) single-spaced typewritten pages). Use the headings below to organize the narrative. The topics and questions following the headings are intended to provide guidance for the information included in the narrative.

1. Governance: Provide a brief description regarding how the school will be governed. Is the developer(s) proposing contractual coordination of services with the district, to manage independently, or a combination of the two? This could include services such as: fiscal management, school administrative support, technology, insurance coverage, audit support, and student resources. Briefly describe the organizational structure. If this had not been determined, a timeline and procedure for making these determinations must be submitted.
2. Management: Who constitutes the development team? How active will the team be in the planning process? What is their long-term commitment to the charter school? What role will

each member play if the application for charter school status is approved? Describe the knowledge, skills or abilities of the team members. What specific experience does the team have in the development of academic programs, curriculum, and administration, including the business and financial operations of the charter school? What relationships do the team members have to each other? What is the current relationship with the local school board?

3. Community Demographics

- Existing Schools: List the number of existing schools serving the population proposed to be served by the charter school, public and non-public within the service area of the charter school. Indicate the anticipated number of students that could be served by the charter school from the service area (which may be beyond the district boundaries).
- Local Demographics: Describe the characteristics of the community including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background and primary languages spoken. Why should a charter school be developed in the community?

4. Teaching staff

- Iowa law requires employees of the charter school to be employees of the school district. Describe initial considerations regarding teaching staff as related to the goals of the charter school. Is there a need for new hires? Is there a potential concern or conflict with the teachers contract if there is one in the district?

5. Admission Requirements

- Charter schools may set admission requirements, but according to state and federal law they may not discriminate against students on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, or disability. Further, charter school admissions cannot discriminate in its student admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude. Based on these requirements, describe the initial plans for admissions.

- **Facilities and Finance**

Provide the following information in narrative form (not to exceed four (4) single-spaced typewritten pages). Use the headings below to organize the narrative. The topics and questions following the headings are intended to provide guidance for the information included in the narrative.

1. Site Specifics: Describe the initial consideration for the building location and space requirements for the charter
2. Building Code Compliance: Describe how the charter school will comply with various building code requirements (i.e. fire safety, health and safety codes, ADA)
3. Readiness: Describe any purchase, leasing or construction that may need to occur and indicate status. Indicate any renovation work that may need to be completed prior to occupancy and what stage that may be in at the time of the planning application.

Finance

1. Start-up Costs: What are the planning costs or pre-operational costs? How will these costs be covered?
2. Anticipated Funding Sources: Indicate the amount and sources of funds, expected to be available through the district, loans, grants, etc. to operate the charter school.
3. Related Worksheet: Complete the Planning Budget

- **Compliance Agreement**

Charter school developers must agree to comply with all applicable federal and state laws related to public charter schools. Complete the Agreement to Comply and the Assurances Forms attached.

Application for Charter School Status

Applications for Charter School Status

If the goal is to establish a charter school at the beginning of the next school year, applications must be received by the local school board on or before October 1, unless the developer and local school board establishes an alternative agreed upon date. The agreed upon date can not be later than November 1 if the goal of the developer is to establish the charter school at the beginning of the school district's next school year. The local school board must approve the application by a majority vote no later than sixty calendar days after the application is received. Once the local school board has approved the application, the local school board must submit the application to the State Board of Education within fifteen (15) days of the local school board ruling.

The Department of Education will review the application to assure all operating requirements have been met and eligibility for implementation funding. All areas of concern will be reviewed jointly with the developer and the local school board. The Department of Education will recommend the application to the State Board of Education for consideration and approval. The state board will only approve ten (10) applications for Charter School Status. Approval will only be made if all the requirements specified in section 256F.1, subsection 3, and sections 256F.4 and 256F.5 of the Iowa Charter School Legislation are met. When an application has approval from both the local school board and The State Board of Education, a Charter School Status Contract will be developed outlining the contractual agreements and providing up to \$390,000 for the implementation of the charter school over a three-year period.

Local school board approved applications should be sent to:

Note: Deadline for Charter School Status Application: October 1 or if approved, November 1 or March 31

Laurie Phelan, Administrative Consultant
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building, 3rd Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

If the application for Charter School Status is denied by a majority vote of the local school board, the developer must receive written notice within 30 days after board action. Specific reasons and support for the denial must be

included in the notice. An appeal of the decision may be made to the State Board of Education with procedures set forth in IC Chapter 1124. The State Board will affirm, modify, or reverse the local school board's decision on the basis of the information provided in the developer's application indicating the ability and willingness of the proposed charter school to meet the requirements of the Iowa Charter School Legislation and Title V, Part B or the No Child Left Behind Act Charter School Program.

Guidelines: Application for Charter School Status:

General Information

- A developer cannot apply to, or be granted a charter by, a school district unless the attendance center is located within the school district.
- A developer can apply directly for charter school status without having submitted a planning application.
- The local board of education shall receive and review all applications for charter schools
- The application shall demonstrate the support of at least 50% of the teachers employed at the school or at the grade level equivalent to that of the proposed charter school on the date of submission of the application,
- The application shall demonstrate that at least 50% of the parents or guardians, whose children are enrolled at the school or are of the grade level in the district that may attend the charter school, have voted in favor of the proposed public charter school. **Note:** Voting could include the following: signing of a petition, a ballot, etc. Regardless of the method, documentation is required.
- Applications must be filed with the local school board by October 1 to be eligible for consideration for the following school year or at another date agreed upon by the developer and the local school board.
- For purposes of reviewing a charter school application, the local school board and school district review committee shall include at least:
 1. One person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools, regardless of whether that person resides within the school district or not; and
 2. One parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in a charter school in the school district; except that, if there are no charter schools in the school district, the local board of education shall appoint a parent or legal guardian of child enrolled in the school district.
- After giving reasonable public notice, the local board of education should hold community meetings in the affected

areas or the entire school district to obtain information to assist the local board of education in its decision to grant a charter school application;

- The local school board, within 60 days after receiving the formal application, shall rule on the application as to whether or not charter school status will be approved and recommended to the State Board of Education. The Iowa Department must receive the approved applications no later than May 15th.
- The approved charter application shall serve as the basis for the public charter school contract. All negotiations between the charter school developer and local school board on the application shall be conducted before approval of the application. All terms of the application must be agreed upon, no later than sixty days after the local school board received the application.
- If the local school board approves the application for Charter School Status, the application and seven (7) copies must be set to The Iowa Department of Education, Attention Laurie Phelan, within 15 days of local school board approval. The State Board of Education will take action on the application within 30 days of the date the application is received by the Department of Education.
- If a local school board denies a charter school status application, it must provide notice of denial to the applicant and the Iowa Department of Education in writing within thirty days (30) after board action. The notification must state its reasons for the denial in a resolution and provide documentation supporting those reasons.
- If a local board of education denies a charter school application, the charter applicant may appeal the decision to the State Board of Education pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 1124, Section 256F.3(5).
- The full Iowa Public Charter School legislation can be found on the web:
www.legis.state.ia.us/GA/79GA/Legislation/SF/00300/SF00348/Current.html

Specific Application Requirements:

Cover Sheet:

- Complete a cover sheet that will include the following items. A sample cover sheet is included in the forms section of this application packet.
- Name of developer(s)
- Addresses, phone number(s) and e-mail addresses of developer(s)
- Resident school district of developer(s)
- Name and contact information for the contact person
- Brief (3-4 lines) description of the proposed charter school
- Name of Proposed Charter School
- Local School District
- Number of students in the district, by elementary, middle and high school
- Whether applicant is proposing a new school within an existing school or converting an existing school to charter school status

Instructions

- Upon Charter School Status application approval from the local school board, provide seven (7) copies, one with original signatures, of the approved application to:

Laurie Phelan, Administrative Consultant
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building, 3rd Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

- The application must follow the format outlined in this application packet. Applicants may include any additional information that they believe will help the Department in making a recommendation to the State Board of Education and/or any additional information required by the local district. Additional materials should be submitted as attachments.

- The original and seven (7) copies must be sent to the Department within 15 days from the date of local board approval.

A. Charter School Overview (10 Points Possible)

Mission and Vision: The mission of the charter school defines the vision and direction of the public charter school. When clarifying the mission the developer should consider the specific population to be served and the unique focus of the school. Reflect upon the educational programs to be offered and how improved student achievement will result.

Provide the following information in narrative form (not to exceed 2 single-spaced typewritten pages).

- Why is the charter school being formed?
- What is the mission or broad goal of the charter school?
- What are the anticipated outcomes? Clearly articulate how the charter school will monitor progress and achieve results.
Note: Iowa Public Charter School Law requires the development of different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes, beyond the ITBS/ITED.
- Describe the characteristics of the community where the charter school will be located including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and primary languages spoken.
- Describe the student needs that will be addressed through the charter school. Specifically address how student learning will be improved.
- What innovative approaches will be used in the charter school and how will they increase learning opportunities for students?
- Describe the specialized focus of the charter if there is one.
- State a clear mission statement for the charter school.

***Example:** To provide a challenging academic program in which all students achieve to their highest potential in a safe, nurturing environment with an emphasis on individual instruction.*

B. Education Program/Student Achievement (40 Points)

Delivering quality educational options for all children is the defining feature of public charter schools. Iowa law requires charter school applications to contain the educational goals, curricula to be offered, and the methods of student assessment. The proposed charter school's educational plan should align the school's mission, goals, instructional program, curriculum, and assessment needs of the population to be served.

Education Goals

Measurable progress over time will be used to evaluate the school's goal attainment. Baseline data must be established during the school's first year.

Provide the following information in narrative form (not to exceed 15 single-spaced typewritten pages). Use the headings below to guide the development of the narrative.

- Academic Goals: List and explain the selection of the academic goals established for the charter school. Each academic goal must:
 - Be challenging and measurable
 - Contain specific achievement indicators
 - Include timeline for achievement
 - Align with the mission of the population to be served
 - Align with grade level or age appropriate student groups
 - Align with academic area focus and must include reading, math and science at the required levels.
- Non-Academic Goals: List any non-academic goals specific to the school. Explain why these goals were selected.

Non-academic goals help the school to address the specific needs of the school and the population to be served. Areas that

may be targeted for improvement may include attendance, parent participation, citizenship, dropout rate, etc.

Each goal must:

- Be measurable
- Align with the school mission

Education Program:

The educational program describes the outcomes, content standards, experiences, areas of focus, curriculum, teaching strategies, methodologies, materials and resources, etc. to be used at the charter school.

- Clearly describe the educational program(s) to be used that are research based.
- Describe how the charter school will increase student achievement.
- The school's education program must be appropriate in relation to the charter school's educational goals and the district goals. Demonstrate the relationship.
- Describe how students will be grouped for instruction.
- Address the topics and criteria listed on pages 11 & 12 of this application package, under the Planning Application Section. If these areas have already been addressed, please reference the pages in the narrative where this information can be located easily.

Assessment Plan

The assessments to be used in determining student achievement and program goal attainment must be valid and reliable. Assessments should measure the knowledge and skills that are expected to be taught in the education program.

At a minimum the State assessment required for accountability (ITED/ITBS; or alternate assessment) must be used to assess achievement. Identify other forms of assessment that will be used to

measure academic growth. The district may require other assessments.

- Describe the process to be used to establish baselines for incoming students. Academic baselines must be established for reading, math, and science. Additionally, the baselines must cover the same grade levels that are required by state and federal law as appropriate to the population of the charter school.
- List the assessments that will be administered annually. If more than one test is to be used, indicate the grade levels for each test.
- List the school specific assessments that are to be used such as end of course assessments and authentic assessments, (i.e. portfolios, projects, performances and activities).
- Describe the process to be used in making evaluative comparisons, interpreting the data and using it to determine the academic progress of all students.
(Data must be disaggregated to identify the achievement for subgroups of students (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, students with disabilities, socioeconomic status, English language learners, etc.)
- Describe the process for reporting on student progress to (1) students and parents, (2) the local school board and Iowa Department of Education, (3) the wider public, and (4) teachers and school staff. Report on student performance as related to state indicators described in Chapter 12.8 (3)

C. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE (25 Points)

Governance

Each charter school will have an Advisory Council to provide oversight and guidance to school implementation, evaluation, and goal attainment. A Charter School Manager will serve as the liaison between the school district, the local school board and the Advisory Council (note: this does not have to be a new position; that is, that an existing employee can serve as the manager). This individual will also be responsible for managing the implementation timeline (including increasing the awareness of parents,

students, communities, and educators regarding the charter school), and submitting all required reports to the local and State Board of Education.

The local school board is responsible for reviewing the progress of the charter school related to student achievement and impact on district achievement goals in relationship to the charter schools approved in the charter application.

Advisory Council

The local charter school advisory council will serve as the immediate oversight mechanism for the school. The local school board in consultation with Advisory Council shall decide matters related to the operation of the school, including budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures. Once an application has been approved for Charter Status by both the local school board and the State Board of Education, the Advisory Council then assures that both the Charter School and the local district fulfill the agreements under the charter contract. The council will meet, at a minimum, quarterly to review the quarterly reports submitted by the administration of the charter school. Additionally, the council will review and approve all annual reports with the local school board and jointly sign for approval prior to submitting the reports to the Iowa Department of Education. At least one member of the council is encouraged to serve on the local School Improvement Advisory Board. Note: Meetings of the Advisory Council are subject to the provisions of IC Chapters 21 and 22.

Provide the following information in narrative and/or graph form (not to exceed 2 single-spaced typewritten pages).

- List the members of the Charter School Advisory Council and clarify the process used to assure the individuals reflect the demographics of the student population to be served by the charter school. If the members have not been appointed, describe the process to be use in appointing members. The Advisory Council will not be less than five (5) or more than nine (9) members.
- **Note:** The council is to be appointed by the local school board and will not include more than one member of the local school board and as per Iowa Charter School Law, and, to the greatest extent possible,

- reflect the demographics of the student population to be served by the charter school.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Council.
 - Indicate the timeline and process to be used in working with the local school board to establish the council if the council is not currently in place. **Note:** The Advisory Council should be in place prior to the start of the charter school.

Application and Enrollment

Provide the following information in narrative and graph form (not to exceed 2 single-spaced typewritten pages). Use the headings below to guide the development of the narrative.

Application period

Student enrollment applications will be accepted throughout the application period. The application period will be a minimum of two weeks in duration. Provisions for evening and weekend enrollments must be available to accommodate the citizens in the community. Applications may be accepted prior to a signed contract, however official enrollments may not occur prior to the formation of the school (a signed contract).

- Submit a description of a market plan that describes how the general public will be provided notice that a charter school is being created. The plan must also describe the admissions policy, criteria, and process. Assure that the admissions policy clarifies the practices in place to assure non-discrimination.
- Submit a copy of the proposed application for enrollment.
- Submit a copy of how your lottery will be conducted for initial and subsequent years of charter school.

Enrollment limits

The school must set a maximum enrollment limit and enrollment limits for each grade. The school may change the enrollment numbers with written approval from the local school board. The change must also be submitted to the Iowa Department of Education. If the

number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building, students must be accepted by a lottery process (random selection drawing). This process is to ensure equal opportunity for all students. The drawing must occur at the end of the application period and be conducted by a third party at a public meeting. List the following for the proposed charter school opening year:

- The maximum enrollment for instructional student grouping
- The maximum school enrollment
- Lottery process

School Calendar

The school calendar must take into consideration state law as well as the unique needs of the academic program. Iowa Charter school law requires charter schools to provide instruction for at least the number of days required under section 279.10, subsection 1 of IC, or to provide at least the equivalent number of total hours.

- List the first day of instruction
- List the last day of instruction
- List the total number of instructional days
- List the total number of instructional hours for the school year
- Provide the proposed school calendar

School Administration and Staff

Provide the following information in narrative and graph form (not to exceed 2 single-spaced typewritten pages). Use the headings below to guide the development of the narrative.

Iowa Public Charter School Law requires that employees of the charter school to be considered employees of the district and hold appropriate licenses according to IC 272.1.

- Describe the process for staffing the charter school including the total number of teaching staff and projected student to teacher ratio

Note: Teachers and administrators of the charter school should, to the greatest extent possible, reflect the demographics of the student population to be served by the public charter school.

- Describe the procedures for administrator and teacher evaluation.
- List the areas planned for professional development.

Note: Assure that all professional development meets the requirements of federal law Title II (A) and Iowa Law Chapter 284.

Federal and State Requirements

Provide the following information in narrative and form (not to exceed one (1) single-spaced typewritten page).

- Describe special education in accordance with 256B.
- Describe the manner in which the charter school will provide special instruction, in accordance with sections 280.4, to students who are limited English proficient.
- Describe the manner in which the charter school will comply with federal and state laws and regulations relating to the federal National School Lunch Act and federal Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C., and chapter 283A.
- Complete the Agreement to Comply and the Assurances Forms attached.

D. FACILITIES AND FINANCE

(25 points)

Iowa Charter School legislation provides for maximum flexibility in many areas including the budget and expenditures. However, charter schools are responsible to the new federal charter schools provision that prohibits LEA's from deducting funds for administrative fees or expenses from a sub-grant awarded to an eligible applicant, unless the eligible applicant voluntarily enters into a mutually agreed upon arrangement for administrative services with the LEA.

Accounting and Finance

- Submit a budget for charter school status approval that includes both the expenses and revenue streams projected for the first year of operation. A continuation plan and budget will be requested approximately nine (9) months into the first year.

At a minimum, the following are the items to be included in the first year of a two-year budget. Include a budget narrative that provides the details and explanations of formulas and calculations. A required format for the budget and budget narrative will be on the Department of Education website:

<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/chart/index.html> by September 22, 2003.

Revenue Streams:

- Categorical funding
- Per pupil revenue funding
- Federal aid (e.g. Title 1, special education)
- Other anticipated funding sources including the grant awarded for a successful charter school status application

Projected Expenses:

- Salaries and benefits
- Lease agreement
- Utilities
- Accounting
- Materials and supplies
- Marketing
- Postage & Printing
- Audit (fiscal and program) and legal
- Other costs

Note: The charter school is subject to the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as the school district. The audit shall be consistent with the requirements of sections 11.6, 11.14, 11.19, 256.9, subsection 19, and section 279.29, except to the extent deviations are

necessary because of the program at the school. The US Department of Education, The Iowa Department of Education, the state auditor, or the legislative fiscal bureau may conduct financial, program, or compliance audits.

Site and Facilities

Submit a two (2) page narrative description of the proposed site/facility. The narrative should include the following items as applicable:

- List the street address and provide a brief explanation of traffic flow.
- Student instructional groupings to be served in the proposed facility
- General description of the interior and exterior of the building (e.g. materials, # of floors, accessibility)
- Number of classrooms and restrooms and accessibility
- List other rooms such as library, gym, ICN, etc.
- Provide one copy of the current health inspection approval
- Describe briefly why this location was selected.
- Describe the agreement between the application developer and the local school board regarding legal liability and applicable insurance coverage for the charter school. Charter schools are part of a public school district, and school district liability.
- Describe the types and amount of insurance coverage for the charter school

Note: the Charter School Developer and the local school district are responsible for assuring that all required health, safety and accessibility requirements have been met prior to the opening of the charter school.

Transportation Plan:

A charter school may choose not to provide any transportation services, however, then the Developer must negotiate to utilize the district's existing transportation department, or contract with an outside provider for transportation services. If a charter school's

approved charter includes provisions of transportation services by the school district, the charter school and the school district shall collaborate in developing a transportation plan to use school district equipment to transport students enrolled in the charter school. This plan should include the transporting of charter school students to and from the charter school and their homes and to and from the charter school and any extracurricular activities. If a charter school chooses not to utilize district transportation services but plans to provide transportation for pupils on its own, provide a description of how the charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of its pupils, and specifically the needs of low-income and academically low-achieving pupils.

The provision of transportation services involves many federal and state rules and regulations, and involves insurance and other liability implications. Any small vehicles or school buses owned and operated by a charter school or school district or under contract must meet the safety and operating standards as prescribed in Iowa State Board Rules. Contact Max Christiansen at the Iowa Department of Education with any questions at 515-281-4749.

Sustainability Plan

Include within the budget narrative the details for how the Public Charter School will be sustained beyond the funding provided through the grant.

E. REQUIRED FORMS

For Planning complete the following forms:

- Cover sheet *
- Charter School Student Population Form*
- Planning Timeline*
- Planning Budget and Narrative*
- Agreement to Comply Form*
- Assurances*

For Charter School Status complete the following forms or lists:

- Cover sheet*
- Charter School Student Population Form*
- Create an Implementation Timeline
- Charter School Status Budget (Also provide a budget narrative supporting all planned expenditures and formulas.
- Agreement to Comply Form*
- Assurances*
- List requested State Law Waivers

* Forms or sample forms are provided.

Reporting Forms

Note: The Iowa Department will create the forms required for reporting and they will be distributed to all approved planning and charter school status applications.

CRITERIA
Grant Proposal Section – Charter School Status
2003-2004

Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the level of importance of the item within each of the four categories.

Overview (10 total points)

- Mission (3)
- Purpose (2)
- Innovation (3)
- Specialized focus (2)

Education Program/Student Achievement (40 total points)

- Performance goals and objectives for evaluating student achievement including baseline data. A baseline may be established using existing test scores. If existing test scores will not be used, describe how the baseline will be established in the first year of operation. Include a statement indicating how the charter school will meet the purpose of a charter school as outlined in IC section 256F.1, subsection 3, and the minimum state and federal statutory requirements of a charter school as outlined in IC section 256F.4, subsection 2. (15)
- Education Plan: curriculum, instruction, methodology and services offered to students (15)
- Statements indicating how the charter school will meet the purpose of a charter school as outlined in IC section 256F.1, subsection 3, and the minimum state and federal statutory requirements of a charter school as outlined in IC.

Organization and Structure (25 total Points)

- Governance (3)
- Advisory council (3)
- Grade levels, student admission process (3)
- Teachers & administrators employed and qualifications (3)
- Teacher evaluation and professional development (5)
- Plan of operations (5)
- Non-compliance rules (3)

Facilities Support (25 total points)

- Facilities (location, modifications, access, etc.) (5)
- Financial plan (Budget and budget narrative) (5)
- Liability assurance (5)
- Insurance coverage (5)
- Transportation plan (5)

Timeline for implementation (Required)